

the public good. Naturally, therefore, he is debarred from making money at the expense of other persons, and certain profitable avenues of commerce are closed to him at the outset. " It is not lawful to take up or keep up any oppressing monopoly or trade, which tends to enrich you by the loss of the Common-wealth or of many."

But the Christian must not only eschew the obvious extortion practised by the monopolist, the engrosser, the organizer of a corner or a combine. He must carry on his business in the spirit of one who is conducting a public service ; he must order it for the advantage of his neighbour as much as, and, if his neighbour be poor, more than, for his own. He must not desire " to get another's goods or labour for less than it is worth/' He must not secure a good price for his own wares " by extortion working upon men's ignorance, error, or necessity/'¹ When prices are fixed by law, he must strictly observe the legal maximum ; when they are not, he must follow the price fixed by common estimation. If he finds a buyer who is willing to give more, he " must not make too great an advantage of his convenience or desire, but be glad that [he] can pleasure him upon equal, fair, and honest terms," for " it is a false rule of them that think their commodity is worth as much as any one will give." If the seller

foresees that in the future prices are likely to fall, he must not make profit out of his neighbour's ignorance, but must tell him so. If he foresees that they will rise, he may hold his wares back, but only—a somewhat embarrassing exception—if it be not "to the hurt of the Commonwealth, as if . . . keeping it in be the cause of the dearth, and . . . bringing it forth would help to prevent it." If he is buying from the poor,¹¹ charity must be exercised as well as justice "; the buyer must pay the full price that the goods are worth to himself, and, rather than let the seller suffer because he cannot stand out for his price, should offer him a loan